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RE: Raised House Bill 6357, An Act Creating the Offense of Cyber Stalking

Senator Stillman, Representative Dargan, and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, we would like to express our thanks to you for raising House Bill 6357 which will make cyber stalking a crime in Connecticut. And we also thank you for the opportunity to voice our concern about the devastating affects of cyber stalking and to present the details of our own hellish trauma of being cyber stalked for several years. Cyber stalking is a serious crime which is growing at an alarming rate. There are people who have been killed and committed suicide as a result of being cyber stalked, and many thousands of victims have to try to live every day with being harassed, intimidated, lied about and threatened by cyber stalking thugs. The organization Halt Abuse (www.haltabuse.org) receives 50 to 100 new complaints from cyber stalking victims every week, and that is just what is reported to this one organization. We need strong laws in Connecticut to prevent this crime from happening to us personally and to the many thousands of other victims.

In our own personal situation we have been cyber stalked for 8 years by Paulette's estranged brother, Kenneth F. Parks of Duluth, Georgia. Parks has posted over two dozen malicious, harassing web sites filled with all kinds of lies and false accusations against us, Paulette's mother, and dozens of other victims. Parks has also made literally hundreds of chat room posts filled with the same malicious lies and threats and advertising links to his web sites. He has posted our names and address and urged "militant extremists" to "visit" us. He has posted threats of physical harm and death against Paulette, asking me if I have enough insurance on my wife and threatening that the "hand of God" is going to come against her. He also vowed in a posting that he would "destroy that good reputation of hers," referring to Paulette. He's even made posts on chat rooms pretending to be Paulette in an effort to incite people against her. Repeatedly throughout his web sites and on numerous chat room posts he falsely boasts that he has won all of his numerous pro se lawsuits against his victims and that he never lost custody of any of his children, despite the fact that all court documents demonstrate he has lost every one of his harassing lawsuits and he did lose custody.

Parks' harassing web sites are filled with false and inflammatory accusations against dozens of victims, but most especially against Paulette. He falsely accuses her of being a child abuser, a libelous accusation clearly intended to incite others and to cause her to lose her job as a teacher. He also falsely accuses her of being deranged and accuses us both of being domestic terrorists who associate with felons. Parks makes reference to Paulette's previous divorce and accuses her of having been violent and abusive in the relationship, when in fact it was her ex-husband who was abusive and was at one time admitted to a psychiatric ward because of his mental health problems. Parks also sent a harassing and threatening e-mail to the administration at the high school where Paulette was teaching at the time and he mentions the school several times in his web sites. Every time there was a lock down at the school Paulette couldn't help but fear that Parks or someone he had incited was at the school to do some kind of harm. Parks' harassment and threats not only put Paulette at risk, but also put at risk every other person and child in that school and the community at large.

Parks' web site called paulettebuchananlies.com demonstrates how consumed he is in hunting down his sister. This web site shows, consisting of multiple web pages, is only a small fraction of the malicious, harassing accusations Parks makes against her and his other victims on all of his other inter-

linked web sites (at least five others that we know of). A search on Google or on any other search engines on either of our names, especially Paulette's, shows how determined Parks is to globally cyber stalk us and incite others against us. Every day our privacy rights are being violated, as they have for nearly a decade, as are also our constitutional rights to live securely. Every day we are concerned about identity theft against us because of Parks' history of stealing others' identities and causing financial damage.

Ever since Parks got involved in a religious cult in the early 1980's he has claimed to hear voices and get visions from God. He believes that he is supernaturally commissioned to "expose the sins" of his enemies. He threatened to kidnap his children, to cause people financial damage, and to "publicly shame" his enemies. He has come through on all those threats. For years he threatened to physically harm people with the "wrath of God." His death threats are the only threats he hasn't carried out yet. Parks has gotten away with so many crimes, including abusing and neglecting his children, pulling a gun on his ex-wife in front of the children during a child visitation exchange, and physically attacking his ex-wife and other women (he does have convictions for battery and trespass). Because he has not been held accountable for so many crimes, and especially **because he thinks he's acting under God's command, Parks is a great danger.** He has been actively trying to incite someone to come against us and harm us, but if he cannot get someone else to do it we have every reason to fear that he will do it himself. **Parks boasts on chat rooms about having guns and we are in very reasonable fear for our safety based on his past and recent threats.**

Twice in the last few years there has been a strange car parked in front of our property. We live on a quiet street in a somewhat rural area and there is no reason for anyone to be stopped there. In the first incident the driver in the car looked like Paulette's brother, so she called 911. The 911 dispatcher at Troop K initially yelled and ridiculed Paulette, so she angrily left our property and went to the police in person to demand that they help or we would seek legal complaint. More helpful officers did then help and put out an all-points bulletin. About a year ago Paulette noticed a car parked on our street near our property when she was going to work. She stopped to ask the driver if he needed any help and he said no. Because of his odd behavior Paulette called the police and this time they caught the person. He claimed to just be looking for a lost dog, but his behavior was very suspicious. Paulette missed a day of work due to the time it took the police to find the driver and being upset about the potential that this person could have been sent from her brother to harm her or do damage to our property. The bottom line is that no one should have to live in constant fear like this, but given the long-term aggravated nature of Parks' cyber stalking and threats against us, for our own safety we have to be constantly on guard and wary of anything suspicious.

The continual stress caused by Parks' ongoing cyber stalking and threats has taken a great toll on our health. We don't sleep well, and we are always tense and stressed, often at the point of despair. It's like being a soldier in a war — you can never relax or let your guard down because the enemy is always lurking about. This is the nightmare scenario for all victims of cyber stalking. How can you not constantly worry about whether someone will see and believe the harassing lies posted about you? How can you not worry that this might cost your job or keep you from getting a job when employers regularly do Internet searches on potential and current employees? Such stress could easily drive a person to desperate measures. There have been cases in the national news of people committing suicide because of being cyber stalked. The best known is a 13 year old Missouri girl who committed suicide after being harassed on MySpace. There was also a case reported on CNN news about a father in New Jersey who shot and killed a young man who had been harassing and threatening his son on a chat room. No victim of crime should have to live this way. Strong cyber stalking laws must be enacted and enforced by the courts to protect victims.

Parks shows many signs of being mentally unstable and in fact he has two brothers who are documented as mentally ill. One is in state care and the other receives federal assistance due to his mental illness. Parks has never been able to hold down jobs for very long and he is apparently

unemployed at present. The family has for years sought to get mental health treatment for Parks, but have been failed again and again by mental health authorities. In spite of the fact that most people who view Parks' web sites and chat room posts realize that there's something wrong with him, he has still managed to get supporters to believe him. He had two friends in Italy (one who is a web host owner who posted some of Parks' web sites) who joined in his harassment and stalking campaign, and some chat room members have believed his lies as well. He now has the support of the pastor of a mega-church that he attends in Georgia, despite the fact that the pastor is aware of the outstanding harassment arrest warrant against Parks as well as Parks' ongoing cyber stalking. Parks' new wife also supports him, although she did admit to Parks' mother that she wouldn't want anyone doing the same thing to her. Parks also has support from the companies that host his web sites. In spite of the fact that Parks' sites are in violation of their posted terms of service, one of the web host owners has told us in e-mail that he's in full support of Parks. He is not only aiding and abetting Parks, but he is profiting from Parks' crimes.

Parks claims on his ETC Ministries web site to be a charity and ministry leader in an effort to dupe the public for money and support. In 2005 an investigative journalist named Michael Barrick wrote a public warning article about Parks and his so-called "ministry" which was based on personal contact as well as all of the documentation against him. Mr. Barrick also helped Parks' many victims set up a web site to warn the public about the danger Parks poses in his "ministry," and to clear the names and reputations of his victims. It is a sad commentary on the failures of our legal system that such a web site has to exist, but as long as there is no law enforcement to rein in dangerous people like Parks then the public must be warned of the documented truth about him so as to at least try to prevent anyone else from being victimized by him. Mr. Barrick is now also the victim of Parks' web site cyber stalking campaign of false accusations and attacks against his professional validity.

We have taken our case to every authority we could. We have dealt with local and state police as well as the FBI, contacted states' attorneys and US attorneys in both Connecticut and Georgia, contacted our state and federal representatives, spoken often with the state Victim Advocate as well as federal Victim Advocates, and contacted many other authorities trying to get justice. Thanks to the efforts of state trooper Kelly Kraynek we did get a warrant against Parks for second degree harassment in 2004. So many police and attorneys we have talked to are stunned that we got the warrant. Why should that be? Why should it be such an unusual thing to get a warrant against someone who is committing a crime? We should also have been granted at least three other arrest warrants for multiple counts of harassment based on Parks' direct contact with us and Paulette's employer, but the Norwich state's attorney office lied to us and told both us and Trooper Kraynek that we couldn't get any more arrest warrants against Parks because we already had one. We are very angry about this. It is inexcusable that we were lied to in that way, and now the statute of limitations on these crimes has expired and we cannot get the warrants that we should have had.

In October of 2007 we met with state's attorney Michael Regan in New London and presented him all the evidence of Parks' aggressive harassment and cyber stalking against us in an effort to get Parks extradited. After reviewing the evidence Mr. Regan at first told us that he was very upset about what we have been through and was willing to extradite and prosecute Parks, but his office researched the law and claimed that Internet web sites and postings are not covered by Connecticut's harassment law. He recommended that we petition to get a cyber stalking bill proposed in the legislature and suggested that it should be a Class A misdemeanor because that would make it easier to extradite and allow for stiffer sentencing based on the extent and aggressiveness of the crime.

Parks, like many cyber stalkers, uses the Internet (and especially chat rooms) as a hunting ground to find more victims. Parks has admitted on chat rooms and even to the investigating FBI agent to hacking into web sites and hacking into chat rooms in order to get at people's private registration information. We have witnessed him posting up on one chat room personal information about a woman who was also posting on that chat room and telling her what he

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